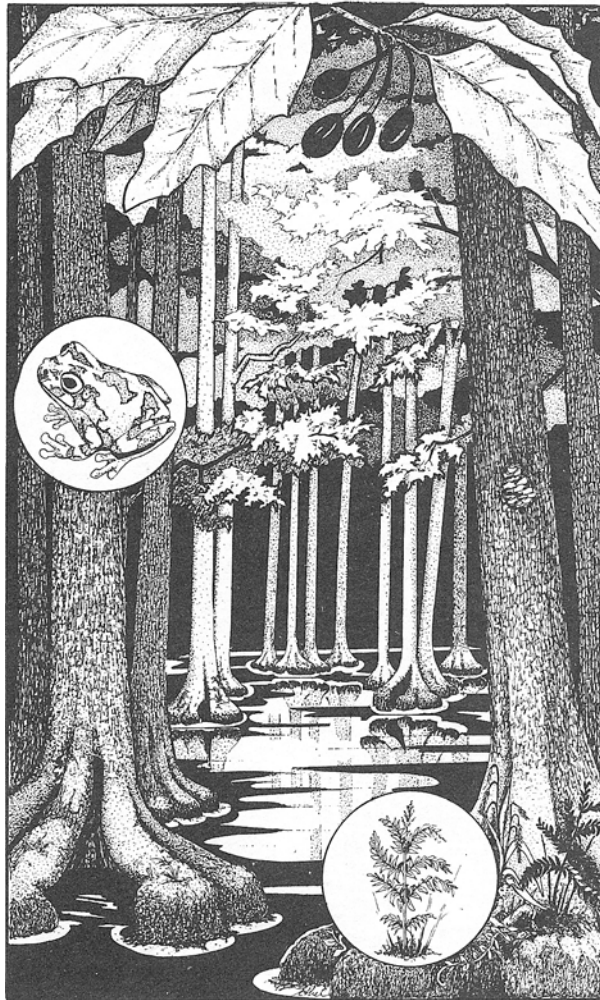


CUPOLA POND NATURAL AREA



MARK TWAIN NATIONAL FOREST ELEVEN POINT RANGER DISTRICT

WHAT IS A NATURAL AREA?

Much of Missouri's original landscape no longer exists, but thanks to the Missouri Natural Areas System, some examples of it are being preserved and protected. Natural areas are important benchmarks to evaluate environmental change and serve as reservoirs of the state biological diversity. Additionally, natural areas provide opportunities for scientific study as well as educational, cultural, and recreational uses. Through protection from development and by managing to preserve the natural characteristics of the areas, the best examples of natural communities are preserved. Natural areas often provide essential habitat for rare and endangered plants and animals.

The Missouri Natural Areas Committee is an interagency committee, consisting of representatives of the Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy and the USDA Forest Service, who coordinate the classification, inventory, designation, and stewardship of natural areas in Missouri. Natural areas are owned by a variety of public agencies as well as private concerns.



The Mark Twain National Forest has a wide selection of natural areas, consisting of fens, sinkhole ponds, glades, forests, and aquatic communities.

CUPOLA POND NATURAL AREA

In certain parts of Missouri karst topography exists. This type of land surface is created as rainwater filters down through limestone or dolomite, forming large caverns and caves. When too much rock dissolves, the cave's ceiling collapses and a sinkhole appears.

Most sinkholes don't hold water, but Cupola Pond is an exception to the rule. Also exceptional about Cupola Pond is the narrow ring of water tupelo trees surrounding the pond. These trees are common in the swamps of the Mississippi delta. The existence of this disjunct (outside of its main range) stand of water tupelo trees indicates Cupola Pond is one of the most ancient sinkhole ponds in the Ozark uplands. Pollen dating techniques indicate the pond is at least 20,000 years old. The only other known stand of water tupelo in the Ozarks is at Tupelo Gum Pond natural area, which is also on the Mark Twain National Forest.

When you walk down into the sinkhole from the surrounding dry, upland forest, the sudden appearance of the old water tupelo trees in the bottom of the depression, with their broad buttresses rising from the coffee-colored water, tells you that this is truly an unusual place. Surrounding the pond are white oak, northern red oak, hickory, and short-leaf pine. Witch's butter, a jelly fungus, clings to the trunks of trees. To the west of the pond, where it drains through an area of pin oak, dense mats of sphagnum moss grow.

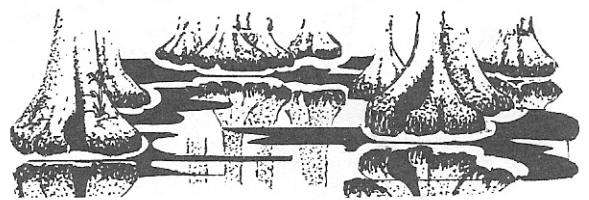
WILDLIFE AT CUPOLA POND

Upland sinkhole ponds occur on dry ridges and therefore are important oases for all wildlife. Around sunrise or dusk, you may see deer coming to drink. Watch and listen for barred owls. Since most sinkhole ponds are fishless, they are important breeding habitats for amphibians; listen for frogs and toads calling and watch for salamanders. Large cavities in the water tupelos provide homes for squirrels.

Be sure to use the **WHAT TO LOOK FOR AT CUPOLA POND** checklist when visiting this Missouri natural area.

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Owned and managed by USDA Forest Service, Mark Twain National Forest – Eleven Point Ranger District.



SPECIAL REGULATIONS

Hunting, fishing, collection of plants or animals, and vehicular traffic is prohibited. Enjoy all other recreational activities allowed on the National Forest.

ADDITIONAL NATURAL AREAS

You may wish to visit nearby natural areas listed below on the same day. For more information on a particular site, check ownership and contact the Forest Service Ranger District office, National Park Service – Ozark National Scenic Riverways, or the Department of Conservation Wildlife District Supervisor in the town listed.

Haney Pond	USFS	Doniphan, MO
Cowards Hollow	USFS	Doniphan, MO
Big Barren Creek	USFS	Doniphan, MO

Wells Branch Fen	USFS	Doniphan, MO
Marg Pond	USFS	Winona, MO
Overcup Oak Sink	USFS	Winona, MO
Mill Mountain	NPS	Van Buren, MO
Cardareva Bluff	NPS/MDC	Van Buren, MO



WHAT TO LOOK FOR AT CUPOLA POND

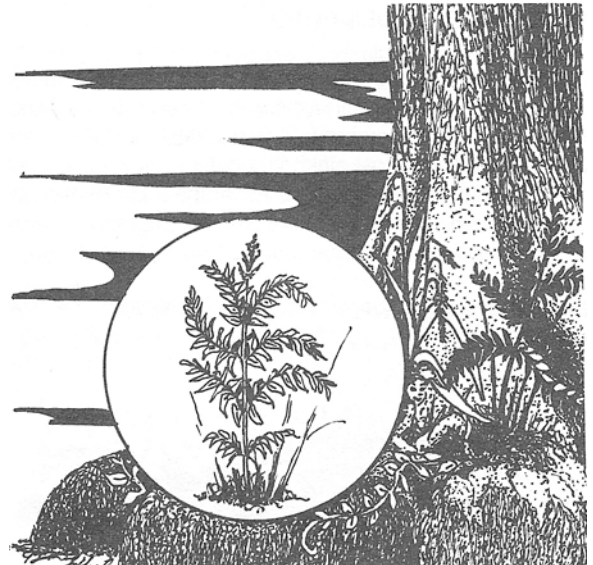
gray treefrog	water horehound
northern spring peeper	mosses
American toad	lichens
marbled salamander	witch's butter
spotted salamander	St. John's wort
great-crested flycatcher	royal fern
prothonotary warbler	buttonbush
tree swallow	pin oak
little blue heron (R)	black gum
white-tailed deer	water tupelo
barred owl	red maple
gray fox	lowbush blueberry

E = endangered R = rare WL = watch list

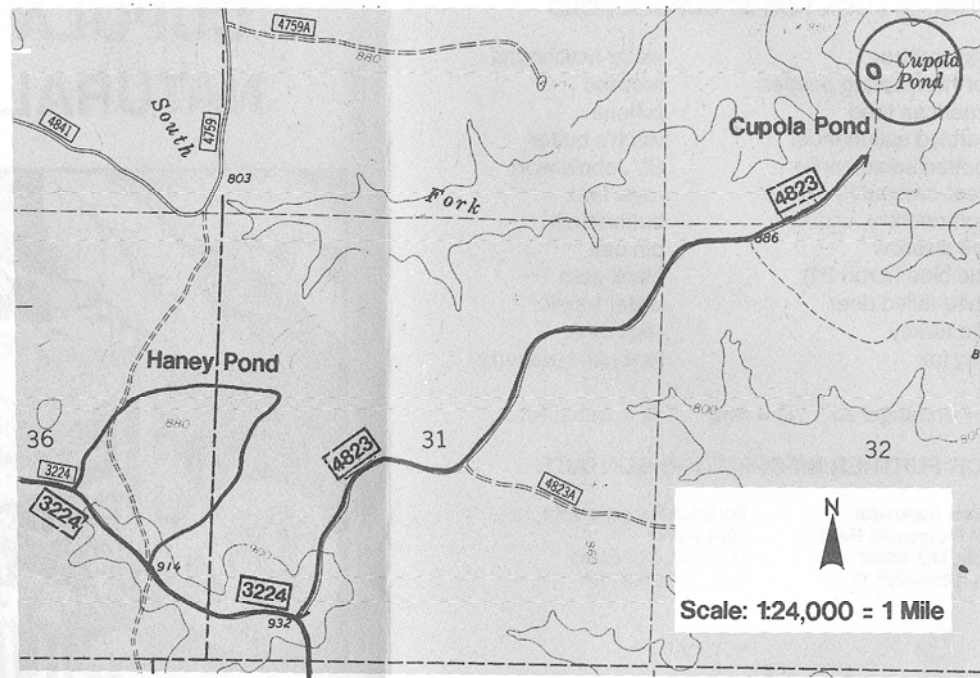
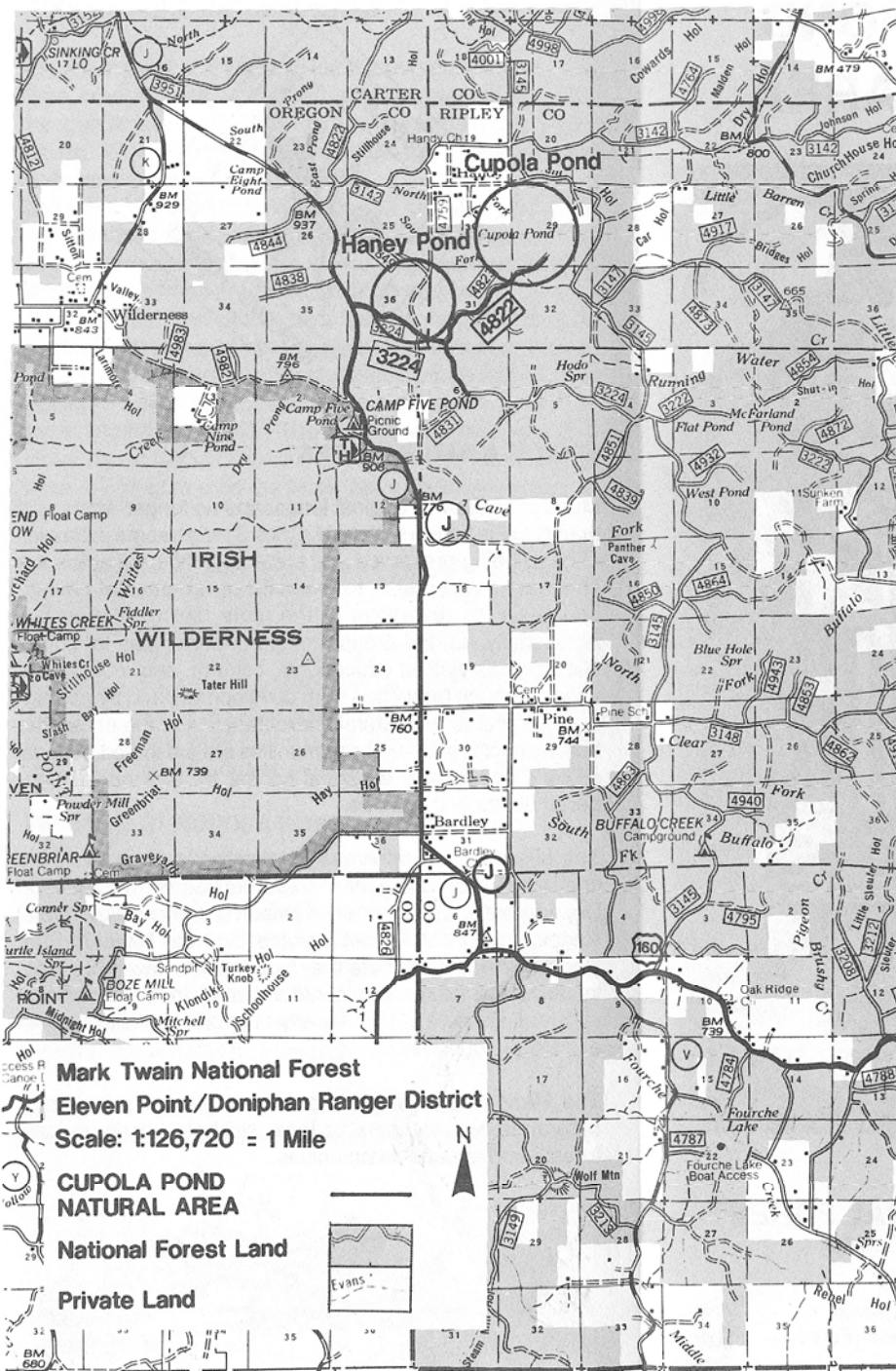
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Forest Supervisor
401 Fairgrounds Road
Rolla, MO 65401
(573) 364-4621

Eleven Point Ranger District
#4 Confederate Ridge Road
Doniphan, MO 63935
(573) 996-2153



Updated wfw 21Oct08



SIZE, LOCATION, AND ACCESS

One hundred and sixty acres (natural area plus buffer zone) in Ripley County. Portions of section 29, T25N, R1W, Handy 7.5 topographical quadrangle. From Doniphan go west on U.S. 160 to state highway J. North on J approximately 8 miles, passing Camp Five Pond, to forest road 3224 on the right. Travel 1 mile on 3224 to forest road 4822. Cupola Pond is at the end of 4822. Watch for natural area signs.

